

## REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending in the application. Claims 2-15 and 17-22 are deemed allowable.

The specification has been objected to for several spelling errors. The specification has been corrected as suggested by the Examiner. No new matter is entered.

Claim 16 has been amended to clarify applicant's claimed invention. The claim includes features of dequantizers dequantizing the separated codes and outputting dequantized values; and quantizers, quantizing the dequantized values, which are output from respective ones of dequantizers, by the second acoustic encoding method to generate codes.

These features are similar to applicant's claim 1 and are supported by the specification.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morrison (5,764,298) in view of Su (6,463,414).

In the cited combination of references both similarly describe converting an encoded signal to a video signal or voice signal, thereafter compressing or encoding the video signal or voice signal and outputting the result.

In contrast applicant's claimed invention converts an encoded voice signal by a first voice encoding method to an encoded voice signal by a second voice encoding method without converting the encoded voice signal by the first voice encoding method to a sound signal.

In Morrison a digital data transcoder is described as including a decoder 204 decoding and converting a received video signal encoded according to MPEG-1 to an uncompressed regular video signal 19. Then an encoder 206 encodes and compresses the uncompressed regular video signal 19 based upon the H.261 recommendation and outputs the result.

Su describes a conference bridge in which decoders 230 and 234 decode signals input from channels 210 and 214. Then mixers 238-242 combine two signals among the decoded signals and a voice signal input from a channel 218. Last, encoders 232 and 236 encode the output signals of the mixers and output the results via channels 212 and 216.

It is respectfully submitted that the combination of Morrison and Su do not teach the features of claim 1 of converting an encoded voice signal by a first voice encoding method to an encoded voice signal by a second voice encoding method without converting the encoded voice signal by the first voice encoding method to a sound signal. Applicant's unique combination of elements also provide a non-obvious combination of features including the code separating means, dequantizers, quantizers, and multiplexing means.

From the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted each reference converts an encoded signal to a video signal or voice signal, thereafter compresses or encodes the video signal or voice signal and outputs the result, but fail to describe or suggest applicant's claimed invention. Because the combination of references fails to teach each element of claim 1 it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claim 16:

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vetro et al. (6,493,386) (Vetro) in view of Beggan (6,460,158).

Applicant's claim 16 includes a unique combination of elements including the code separating means, dequantizers, quantizers, and means for multiplexing. The combination of elements provides a non-obvious combination of features neither taught or suggested in the combination of references.

Vetro relates to an object based bit-stream transcoder which converts a first bit rate of an input bit-stream to a second bit rate. Vetro does not disclose the claimed invention.

Beggan discloses an error concealment procedure.

However the combination fails to disclose all the features in claim 16 and in addition even if all the features were disclosed there is no suggestion which would lead one skilled in the art to make such a combination of prior art. Thus even if all the elements were present in the cited references, it is well-established that a combination of limitations, some of which separately may be known, may be a new combination of limitations which is nonobvious under


the condition of 35 U.S.C. 103. The only such suggestion provided has been from applicant's own disclosure.

It view of the foregoing it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 16 be withdrawn.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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